

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

AGS: BTIO, EINV, EFIS, IN

SUBJECT: CASTLE AND COOKE STUDYING INDIAN OCEAN
TUNA INVESTMENT

REF: BOMBAY 1137

1. WILLIAM B. HUSSEY WAS FORMERLY FSO WHO SERVED AS CHARGE
IN PORT LOUIS IN EARLY 1960S AND WAS LATER U.N. REPRESENTATIVE
IN WESTERN SAMOA. HE NOW RESIDES IN PAGO PAGO AMERICAN
SAMOA AND WORKS AS FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONSULTANT TO MULTINATIONAL
FIRMS. HE VISITED MADRAS AND COCHIN LAST FEBRUARY TO BEGIN
STUDY ON BEHALF OF CASTLE AND COOKE (DOLE PINEAPPLE, STANDARD
FRUIT, BUMBLE BEE SEAFOODS) TO DETERMINE WHERE BEST TUNA
RESOURCES ARE LOCATED IN INDIAN OCEAN AND HOW FIRM CAN GO
ABOUT TYING DOWN RELIABLE LONG TERM SOURCE OF SUPPLY TO BE
MARKETED IN THE U.S. UNDER BUMBLE BEE BRAND. COMPANY
IS MORE INTERESTED IN MARKETING THE PRODUCT THAN IN
CATCHING OR PROCESSING IT, AND WHILE IT MAY FIND IT NECESSARY TO
INVEST TO SOME DEGREE IN ON-SHORE PROCESSING FACILITY AND
FISHING VESSELS, IT WOULD PREFER TO AVOID BOTH COST AND RISK
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OF SUCH STEPS. COMPANY'S OBJECTIVE SEEMS TO BE TO STUDY WHAT
FACILITIES EXIST IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES STRETCHING FROM MAURITIUS

THROUGH THE MALDIVE ISLANDS, INDIA AND CEYLON AS FAR AS INDONESIA, CORRELATE THESE WITH THE LOCATION OF TUNA RESOURCES, AND PROCEED ACCORDINGLY.

2. IN THE SECOND STAGE OF THIS STUDY, HUSSEY IS VISITING POTENTIAL SITES TOGETHER WITH ROBERT W. FISHER, VICE PRESIDENT, HAWAII REGION, CASTLE AND COOKE FOODS INC., 610 IWILEI ROAD, HONOLULU 96817, AND RUDY KUNIHISA, A FISHERIES EXPERT FROM THE COMPANY. PARTY ARRIVED IN MADRAS MAY 30 FROM SRI LANKA, AND WILL VISIT COCHIN AND TRIVANDRUM BEFORE PROCEEDING TO BOMBAY.

3. WE ARRANGED AN APPOINTMENT IN MADRAS WITH V.A. KURIEN, PRESIDENT OF SOUTHERN SEA FOODS, WHO HAD BEGUN NEGOTIATIONS A BIT MORE THAN ONE YEAR AGO WITH NICHIRYO OF TOKYO, JAPAN FOR A LARGE SCALE TUNA FISHING VENTURE. THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE BROKEN OFF WHEN THE JAPANESE COMPANY RAN INTO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES DURING THE ENERGY CRISIS. AT THE MOMENT, NO ONE IS EXPLOITING THE TUNA RESOURCES OFF INDIA'S COAST. HOWEVER, KURIEN SAID THE JAPANESE HAVE INDICATED AN INTEREST IN DOING SO, AND THE SOUTH KOREANS ARE ALSO KEEN. BOTH KURIEN AND KUNISHIHA AGREED THAT THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL TUNA RESOURCES IN INDIAN WATERS, PARTICULARLY OFF THE WEST COAST. KURIEN HAS TOLD US HE IS GOING TO JAPAN IN LATE JUNE AND WILL EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES WITH HIS CONTACTS AND GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH CASTLE AND COOKE.

4. IN COCHIN, WE ARRANGED APPOINTMENTS AS REQUESTED WITH P.K. EAPEN, A JAPANESE TRAINED FISHERIES EXPERT WITH SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE OF TUNA FISHING WHO IS EMPLOYED BY TATA OIL MILLS FISHERIES DIVISION, AND WITH K. CHIDAMBARAM, DIRECTOR OF THE GOI MARINE PRODUCTS EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY. CASTLE AND COOKE MAY BE LEANING TOWARD TATA, SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO UNDERTAKE PROCESSING IN INDIA, BOTH BECAUSE OF THE FIRM'S REPUTATION FOR INTEGRITY AND ITS FINANCIAL STRENGTH, AS WELL AS OUT OF RESPECT FOR EAPEN'S EXPERTISE WHICH IS AT PRESENT UNDERUTILIZED. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING BRIEFINGS ON THE INDIAN SEAFOOD INDUSTRY AT THE CONGEN AS WELL AS COMMENTS
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TO THE SAME EFFECT MADE BY KURIEN, FISHER AND HUSSEY REALIZE THAT SOME OF THE LARGE FIRMS WHICH HAVE GOTTEN INTO THE SEAFOOD EXPORT BUSINESS DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE DONE SO MAINLY TO EARN IMPORT LICENSES FOR SPARE PARTS NEEDED FOR THEIR OTHER OPERATIONS, AND HAVE NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY AGGRESSIVE IN EXPANDING BEYOND LIMITED SHRIMPING OPERATIONS. THUS, THEY MAY WELL GIVE ANY PROPOSAL KURIEN OR OTHER SMALLER OPERATORS MAKE A GOOD HEARING.

5. FOR BOMBAY: EAPEN OF TATA OIL MILLS SAID HUSSEY AND FISHER SHOULD DISCUSS ANY POLICY MATTERS RE COLLABORATION WITH D.S. SETH AND N.K. BHANDA OF TATA HEAD OFFICE IN BOMBAY. HUSSEY MAY ALREADY HAVE REQUESTED SUCH APPOINTMENTS IN HIS CABLE TO YOU, AND EAPEN MAY ALSO FLY TO BOMBAY WITH FISHER AND HUSSEY TO COORDINATE THINGS. HOWEVER, YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT TATA OFFICE JUST TO MAKE SURE.
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